



# "CROTCH ROCKET MEETS TRACTOR"



➤ **Review:** Effective communication is necessary in every relationship. The video explained the following four tips:

**1. Words: Serious Horsepower.**

**List:** Read James 3:3-12. List three reasons why it is of critical importance to use words with restraint and wisdom.

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**2. Questions: Stay Grounded.** Learning to ask wise, heart-revealing questions is critical because they: show humility; avoid assumptions; get others out of mental ruts; clarify; reveal hidden issues; and unlock new opportunities. However, before you start asking questions, you first need to cultivate an atmosphere and attitude conducive to heart-level conversations. Review this list of tips together:

- ✓ Relax and know that God designed both fathers and sons to desire heart-level conversations with each other. Like a garden, it will blossom with care and cultivation.
- ✓ Don't have an agenda or assume you know their answers. Value authentic heart searching.
- ✓ Don't answer for the other person.
- ✓ Learn to be comfortable with silence while others are thinking. Identifying heart motivations is a learnable skill that does not come naturally to most men. Younger boys especially need more time to gather and express their thoughts.
- ✓ Answers must be voluntary! **Never** use pressure, guilt or manipulation.
- ✓ Dads need to set the example by being transparent and forthright; but don't expect openness from your son until he is ready to give it. Give your son the freedom to simply "Pass" on any question. Trust is earned by consistency, patience, and servant-leadership. Demanding answers typically kills relationships.
- ✓ When critiqued, don't respond defensively, but in humility. If there is an "edge" in your voice, stop and address whatever is causing it. Repent and move on. Memorize Proverbs 12:1
- ✓ Ask clarifying questions like, "What do you mean when you said \_\_\_\_\_?" and "What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?"
- ✓ Reflect their answers back to confirm understanding by using phrases like, "I hear you saying \_\_\_\_\_, am I understanding you accurately?"
- ✓ As much as possible, discover the motivations, convictions, and attitudes of the heart.
- ✓ Extend each other lots of grace and forgiveness!

**3. Counter-steer: Listen Don't Lecture.** A man's natural inclination is to quickly "fix" a problem. But we must first accurately identify the heart motivation before we can effectively help. Yes, it is important to discipline wrong behaviour. But like using a hammer on a screw is a father who corrects his son's behaviour, yet fails to understand the motivation. Steer the opposite way of your natural inclination and listen – don't lecture. *"Seek first to understand before being understood"-Stephen Covey.* Normally, relational and character issues cannot be "fixed" quickly but require a process.

**4. Start: Never Stop Learning.** I've been a student of communication and questions for over 10 years and I'm still learning! (Tip: Start making a list of wise questions, study how Jesus asked questions, or read books on the subject. These skills will also benefit your marriage, friendships, business, etc. Enjoy the journey!)

➤ **Communicate:** Take some time to ask each other some questions. Come up with your own questions or use some of the sample questions below.

Sample questions for fathers to ask sons:

1. What area of fatherhood do you think I'm doing well in? Where can I improve?
2. Can you think of a time (that we haven't dealt with already) when I have wronged you or didn't keep my word?
3. Is there anything going on in your life or our home that causes you concern?
4. Is there anything you would like to discuss with me?
5. Is there anything I can change that would make you feel more comfortable to approach me with questions or concerns?
6. What's one thing I can do to deepen our relationship?

Sample questions for sons ask to fathers:

1. Dad, can I ask you about \_\_\_\_\_? (anything on your heart)
2. Have you ever \_\_\_\_\_? (most things a son struggles with, a father has struggled with as well)
3. What is one area of Christian character that you think I need to grow in?

If you have questions, please contact your group leader or see [www.malachiman.com](http://www.malachiman.com) for more resources.

Remember to bring this sheet to the next Malachi Man Session (only you will see it).